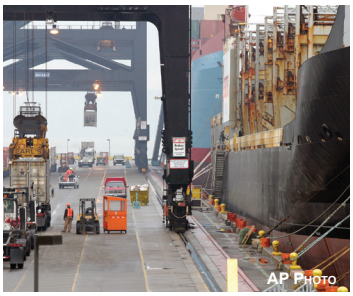
# Ten Things You Should Know About the State Department

AP Photo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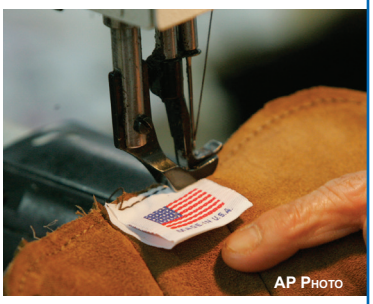
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What do the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) do for the American people? With just over one percent of the entire federal budget, we have a huge impact on how Americans live and how the rest of the world engages America.

For example:

1. **We create American jobs.** We directly support 20 million U.S. jobs by promoting new and open markets for U.S. firms, protecting intellectual property, negotiating new U.S. airline routes and fisheries treaties worldwide, and competing for foreign government and private contracts.

2. **We support American citizens abroad.** In 2011, we provided emergency assistance to U.S. citizens in countries experiencing natural disasters or civil unrest. We assisted in 9,393 international adoptions and worked on more than 1,700 child abduction cases -- resulting in the return of over 660 American children.

3. **We promote democracy and foster stability around the world.** Stable democracies are less likely to pose a threat to their neighbors or to the United States. In South Sudan, Libya and many other countries we worked through various means to foster democracy and peace.

4. **We help to make the world a safer place.** Together with Russia, under the New START Treaty, we are reducing the number of deployed nuclear weapons to levels not seen since the 1950s. Our nonproliferation programs have destroyed stockpiles of missiles, munitions and material that can be used to make a nuclear weapon. The State Department has helped more than 40 countries clear millions of square meters of landmines.

5. **We save lives and protect the environment.** Strong bipartisan support for U.S. global health investments has led to worldwide progress against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, smallpox and polio. Better health abroad reduces the risk of instability and enhances our national security. We lead efforts to combat global climate change.

6. **We help countries feed themselves.** We help other countries plant the right seeds in the right way and get crops to markets to feed more people. Strong agricultural sectors lead to more stable countries.

7. **We help in times of crisis.** From earthquakes in Haiti, Japan and Chile to famine in the Horn of Africa, our dedicated emergency professionals deliver assistance to those who need it most.

8. **We promote the rule of law and protect human dignity.** We help people in other countries find freedom and shape their own destinies. Reflecting U.S. values, we advocate for the release of prisoners of conscience, prevent political activists from suffering abuse, train police officers to combat sex trafficking and equip journalists to hold their governments accountable.

9. **We help Americans see the world.** In 2011, we issued 12.6 million passports and passport cards for Americans to travel abroad. We facilitate the lawful travel of international students, tourists and business people to the U.S., adding greatly to our economy. We keep Americans apprised of dangers or difficulties abroad through our travel warnings.

10. **We are the face of America overseas.** Our diplomats, development experts, and the programs they implement are the source of American leadership around the world. They are the embodiments of our American values abroad. They are a force for good in the world.

**For a very small investment the State Department and USAID yield a large return by advancing U.S. national security, promoting our economic interests, and reaffirming our country's exceptional role in the world.**